GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:281
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2000
AMENDMENT IN CABLE TV NETWORK (ACT) 1995 TO CURB OBSCENE ADVERTISEMENTS
ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Cable Television Network (Regulation) Act, 1995 to curb obscene advertisements;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have also instructed TV channels to observerestraint in using Gods and prophets belonging to various religions while accepting advertisements for these channels; and

(d) if so, the action proposed to be taken against TV channels found violating the said instructions?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF TH MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a), (b), (c) & (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENTREFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THELOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 281 FOR ANSWER ON 11.8.2000

(a) & (b): The advertising code under the Cable Television Networks Rules provides that the cable operators shall ensure that the portrayal of the female form in the programmes carried in his cable service, is tasteful and aesthetic, and is within the well established norms of good taste and decency. However, as per proviso to Section 5 & 6 of the existing Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, the programme and advertising code under the Cable Television Network Rules are not applicable to free to air foreign satellite channels, which can be received without the use of any specialized gadgets or decoders. The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2000 introduced in Lok Sabha on 03.08.2000, inter-alia aims to remove this anomaly.

(c): Yes, Sir. Various satellite channels were advised to exercise restraint in using Gods and Prophets belonging to various religions, respected leaders and institutions, including Armed Forces while accepting advertisements for being telecast on their channels

(d): The advertising code under the Cable Television Network Rules,amongst others, provides that advertising carried in the cable service shall be so designed as to conform to the laws of the country and should not offend morality, decency and religious susceptibilities of the subscribers. Authorised officers of the respective State Governments have to take necessary action against the cable operators for violating the advertising codes. Action can also be taken against the TV channels uplinking their programmes from India in case specific instances of violating programme and advertising codes are brought to the notice of the Government. However, the satellite TV channels being uplinked from outside India are not legally obliged to follow these programme and advertising codes. With a view to bring these satellite channels under the ambit of rules and regulations framed under the Cable Networks Act, the Government has recently liberalized its uplinking policy, permitting all satellite channels to uplink from India provided they undertake to comply with programme and advertising codes.